



# MEDIA ADVISORY

STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **TENNCARE STANDARD SPEND DOWN HOTLINE CLOSES**

*DHS CALL CENTER TAKES 2,500 REQUESTS IN UNDER TWO HOURS*

**NASHVILLE, TENN.**—The Tennessee Department of Human Services reached the limit of 2,500 individuals to be registered in the first round of Standard Spend Down on the first day of open enrollment. The phone lines, which opened at 6:00 p.m. CST, were closed at 7:10 p.m. CST.

Standard Spend Down is a waiver to the state's TennCare program for individuals who are aged, blind, disabled, or the caretaker relative of a Medicaid-eligible child. Income and resource limits also apply. The program is targeted to individuals who have very low incomes or very high medical bills.

The individuals who called to request an application will be screened to determine if they are already receiving TennCare benefits. If so, they will receive a letter informing them that they are already enrolled in the program. Those who are not currently enrolled in TennCare will be sent an application for the Standard Spend Down program. These applications will be placed in the mail within the next two weeks. Those who receive an application have 30 days to mail their information back to the Tennessee Department of Human Services in the postage-paid envelopes contained in their application packet.

Once the first round of applications has been processed, the public and the media will be given advance notice before the phone lines re-open.

The Standard Spend Down category is able to open enrollment to up to 7,000 new members due to the recently implemented hospital assessment fee. The creation of this fee was a collaborative effort among several entities including hospitals, the Tennessee Hospital Association, the state and the federal government.

For more information on the Standard Spend Down program including eligibility requirements, visit the TennCare website at [www.tn.gov/tenncare](http://www.tn.gov/tenncare).

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